IN THE CLAIMS:

1. (original) A flame retardant for incorporation in a resin to impart flame retardance thereto, characterized as comprising a layered titanic acid in the form of nanosheets intercalated with an organic basic compound.

2. (original) The flame retardant as recited in claim 1, characterized in that said layered titanic acid in the form of nanosheets is obtained by treating a layered titanate with an acid or hot water and then allowing an organic basic compound to act on the layered titanate to thereby effect swelling of interlayer spaces or delamination.

3. (original) The flame retardant as recited in claim 1, characterized in that said layered titanic acid in the form of nanosheets is obtained by treating a layered titanate with an acid or hot water and allowing an organic basic compound to act on the layered titanate, in one pot, to effect swelling of interlayer spaces or delamination.

4. (original) A flame retardant for incorporation in a resin to impart flame retardance thereto, characterized as comprising a

layered titanic acid in the form of nanosheets intercalated either with an organic basic compound and a halogen-free phosphazene compound or halogen-free flame-retardant nitrogen hetero-cyclic compound, or with a halogen-free phosphazene compound or halogen-free flame-retardant nitrogen heterocyclic compound.

5. (original) The flame retardant as recited in claim 4, characterized in that said layered titanic acid in the form of nanosheets is obtained by treating a layered titanate with an acid or hot water and then allowing an organic basic compound and a halogen-free phosphazene compound or halogen-free flame-retardant nitrogen heterocyclic compound to act on the layered titanate, or alternatively, allowing a halogen-free phosphazene compound or halogen-free flame-retardant nitrogen heterocyclic compound alone to act on the layered titanate to thereby effect swelling of interlayer spaces or delamination.

6. (original) The flame retardant as recited in claim 4, characterized in that said layered titanic acid in the form of nanosheets is obtained by treating a layered titanate with an acid or hot water and allowing an organic basic compound and/or a halogen-free phosphazene compound or halogen-free flame-retardant

nitrogen heterocyclic compound to act on the layered titanate, in one pot, to effect swelling of interlayer spaces or delamination.

7. (currently amended) The flame retardant as recited in ~~claim 2, 3, 5 or 6~~ claim 5, characterized in that said layered titanate is represented by a general formula $A_xM_y\square Ti_{2-(y+z)}O_4$ (in the formula, A and M are metals differing from each other and having a valence of 1 - 3, $\square$ is a defective site of Ti, x is a positive real number satisfying $0 < x < 1.0$, and y and z are independently 0 or a positive real number satisfying $0 < y + z < 1.0$).

8. (currently amended) The flame retardant as recited in ~~claim 2, 3, 5 or 6~~ claim 5, characterized in that said layered titanate is represented by $K_{0.5-0.8}Li_{0.27}Ti_{1.73}O_{3.85-4}$.

9. (currently amended) A flame-retardant resin composition characterized as containing 0.5 - 50 parts by weight of the layered titanic acid in the form of nanosheets as recited in ~~any one of claims 1 - 8~~ claim 4, based on 100 parts by weight of a resin.

10. (original) The flame-retardant resin composition as recited in claim 9, characterized in that said layered titanic acid

in the form of nanosheets in the resin exhibits an aspect ratio (Z) in the range of 50 - 100,000.

11. (currently amended) The flame-retardant resin composition as recited in ~~claim 9 or 10~~ claim 9, characterized in that, besides said layered titanic acid in the form of nanosheets, it further contains 0.01 - 50 parts by weight of a halogen-free phosphazene compound, based on 100 parts by weight of the resin.

12. (currently amended) The flame-retardant resin composition as recited in ~~any one of claims 9 - 11~~ claim 9, characterized in that, besides said layered titanic acid in the form of nanosheets, it further contains 0.01 - 50 parts by weight of a halogen-free organic or inorganic flame retardant, based on 100 parts by weight of the resin.

13. (currently amended) The flame-retardant resin composition as recited in ~~any one of claims 9 - 12~~ claim 9, characterized in that said resin is a thermosetting resin.

14. (currently amended) The flame-retardant resin composition as recited in ~~any one of claims 9 - 12~~ claim 9, characterized in

that said resin is a thermoplastic resin.

15. (currently amended) The flame-retardant resin composition as recited in ~~any one of claims 9 – 12~~ claim 9, characterized in that said resin is a biodegradable resin.

16. (currently amended) The flame-retardant resin composition as recited in ~~any one of claims 9 – 12~~ claim 9, characterized in that said resin is an engineering plastic.

17. (currently amended) The flame-retardant resin composition as recited in ~~any one of claims 9 – 12~~ claim 9, characterized in that said resin is a rubber.

18. (currently amended) The flame-retardant resin composition as recited in ~~any one of claims 9 – 17~~ claim 9, characterized in that it achieves a V-0 or V-1 rating in the UL94 flame retardance test.

19. (currently amended) A resin product characterized in that it is obtained by processing the flame-retardant resin composition as recited in ~~any one of claims 9 – 18~~ claim 9.

20. (New) The flame retardant as recited in claim 2, characterized in that said layered titanate is represented by a general formula $A_xM_y\square Ti_{2-(y+z)}O_4$ (in the formula, A and M are metals differing from each other and having a valence of 1 - 3, $\square$ is a defective site of Ti, x is a positive real number satisfying $0 < x < 1.0$, and y and z are independently 0 or a positive real number satisfying $0 < y + z < 1.0$).

21. (New) The flame retardant as recited in claim 2, characterized in that said layered titanate is represented by $K_{0.5-0.8}Li_{0.27}Ti_{1.73}O_{3.85-4}$.